

## An Idea Whose Time Has Come

All across the country, groups are forming to collaborate on critical natural resource issues.

- **National:** The National Water Quality Monitoring Council is working to develop a collaborative framework for the collection, analyses, data management and analyses, and reporting of water-quality monitoring results.

- **Regional:** The Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem Management Program is a regional partnership that has been directing the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.

- **Local:** The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Initiative (GTBWI) is a partnership of 130 organizations whose mission is to promote the ecological integrity of the Watershed to ensure regional economic viability and quality use by collecting, exchanging, and interpreting ecosystem data and fostering relevant research.

- State Councils have been formed in Maryland, Texas, Oklahoma, and Colorado, among others, to coordinate water-quality monitoring efforts.

- Federal, state, tribal, provincial and academic natural resource specialists have been compiling status and trends information on Great Lakes sturgeon. In an effort to enhance the efficiency of this information exchange, a Web Site specifically focused on Great Lakes sturgeon was developed to compile inter-agency information.

- The Indiana and Michigan fishery project on the St. Joseph River includes five fish ladders, a fish hatchery, public access facilities and canoe portages. Joint federal and state funding enables fishery biologists to identify, count, and examine fish.

## We Need You

Council membership was developed to include a wide cross-section of Lake Michigan Basin stakeholders. Efforts undertaken by Council workgroups will need involvement from additional members of the basin-wide monitoring community. If you are involved in monitoring in the basin please view the LMMCC web site at:

<http://wi.water.usgs.gov/lmmcc/>

Sign into the guestbook and volunteer for one of the working groups or provide information on your monitoring program.

For additional information, contact:

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*"The Great Lakes community as a whole is bound together by the common goal of restoring and protecting the Great Lakes. All players make positive contributions to solutions from their own perspective and by applying their unique talents and expertise. None has a monopoly on answers...We must continue to build upon mutual and complementary interests and continue to nurture action by the Great Lakes community."*

—IJC (International Joint Commission), 9th Biennial Report

## Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordination Council

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## What is the Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordination Council?

The LMMCC was formed in 1999. It has 31 members—representing federal, state, tribal, and local governments, watershed groups, the volunteer and environmental communities, universities, the private sector, and the regulated community. The Council co-chairs are elected every two years. Current co-chairs are from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The Council meets a minimum of two times a year in locations throughout the watershed.

## Purpose

Provide a regional forum for coordinating and supporting consistent, scientifically defensible monitoring methods and strategies in the Lake Michigan basin that focus on collaboration and comparability. This is needed both to improve understanding of different impacts on the Lake Michigan resource and to define a regional agenda of needed monitoring, models, and tools.



## Challenge

Each year government agencies, industry, tribes, academia, and private organizations devote enormous amounts of time, energy, and money to monitor, protect, manage, and restore the Lake Michigan watershed. Critical differences in objectives, methods, data analysis, and data management often make it difficult to share and use all monitoring information and results.

## Strategy

Council meetings, biennial conferences, and feedback from constituents will shape the Council's work plan and activities. The Council will develop goals, each with an active working group, whose broad membership will expand the core Council membership. Initial working groups include:

- **Monitoring Objectives:** Define key questions and driving forces for monitoring and determine where research objective compatibilities and incompatibilities exist. Create and communicate goal-oriented monitoring design guidance in the form of a framework that will relate monitoring to management.
- **Data Inventory and Assessment:** Create an ongoing inventory of monitoring efforts in the basin at the federal, tribal, state, and local levels (including volunteer monitoring). Promote data and information sharing to the public and between elements of the water-quality monitoring community.
- **Watershed Pilots:** Select local collaborative efforts that could be instructive for regional work. Assess these projects for lessons learned and recommend improvements.



- **Outreach:** Highlight the benefits of collaboration and coordination of regional monitoring efforts to ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders in Council efforts. Provide support so that Council members can serve as ambassadors to improve awareness of the value of monitoring and transmit useful guidelines to stakeholders and the public.

*"To achieve sustainability in the ecosystem, a policy of stewardship is required on the part of individuals, governments, and nongovernmental organizations....making collaborative decisions on strategies...to restore and protect the Lake Michigan Basin ecosystem"*

—Lake Michigan LaMP (Lakewide Management Plan) 2000